

bill that took care of all the outstanding COVID needs. Yet, within weeks, Democrats here in Congress were proposing another \$2 trillion, most of which had little to do with COVID or the pandemic and a lot more to do with their partisan agenda.

But the point is, the definition of “inflation” is “too many dollars chasing too few goods and services.” That is exactly the situation the Democrats helped create with their so-called American Rescue Plan. They sent too many Federal dollars into the economy, and the economy overheated as a result. Now we are sitting here with the worst inflation in 40 years, and instead of trying to address our inflation crisis, Democrats still—still—want to double down on the strategy that helped get us into this mess in the first place. “Reckless and irresponsible spending” is putting it mildly.

In January, Senator TIM SCOTT and I introduced the Inflation Prevention Act, a bill to stop Congress from considering any legislation that contains new spending and is estimated to increase inflation if the year-over-year inflation rate exceeds 4½ percent. One would hope that legislation like this wouldn't be necessary at a time when inflation far exceeds the target inflation rate, but, as we have seen with Democrats' reckless tax-and-spending spree, that isn't the case.

So Senator TIM SCOTT and I, along with several of our Republican colleagues, have introduced this bill, which would help prevent reckless spending legislation, like the Democrats' so-called Build Back Better Act, when inflation is high.

Again, let me just point out that on top of a \$2 trillion spending bill a year ago in March—less than a year ago in March—the Democrats' prescription now is another \$5 trillion in spending, financed in part with tax increases, which also fuels inflation, and about \$3 trillion in debt on top of the \$30 trillion in debt we already have.

So we have rampant pandemic inflation, attributable largely to the massive spending bill passed on a partisan basis last March. Now, instead of tackling inflation and putting policies in place that would help drive inflation down, the solution Democrats are proposing is a \$5 trillion spending bill.

Americans are struggling. Everywhere they turn, they are facing higher prices, stretching their budgets to the limit. If Democrats really want to help American families, they should abandon the reckless tax-and-spending spree once and for all and focus on mitigating damage they have already done with their inflationary spending.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator MORAN and I be able to complete our remarks prior to the scheduled votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF RETA JO LEWIS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting American manufacturing and support the nomination of Reta Jo Lewis to be President of the Export-Import Bank. As President of Ex-Im and chair of the Bank's Board of Directors, Ms. Lewis will lead our Nation's official export credit Agency as it supports U.S. workers and manufacturers, especially in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and throughout our country. Ex-Im's job is to support American businesses in the face of competition—so often, unfair competition from countries like China.

Ms. Lewis is the leader we need in the fight to help U.S. manufacturers compete globally. She has 25 years of distinguished leadership experience in international affairs, law, and public policy. She is a historic nominee as the first Black woman to lead Ex-Im.

She serves as a senior fellow and director of congressional affairs at the German Marshall Fund, where she leads bipartisan efforts to strengthen transatlantic cooperation. Before joining the German Marshall Fund, Ms. Lewis served in the Obama administration as the State Department's first-ever Special Representative for Global Intergovernmental Affairs.

She will put American workers and exporters first. That has been the hallmark of this administration—putting workers at the center of our government; putting workers at the center of our economic policy.

Ms. Lewis understands that Ex-Im is vital to these manufacturing jobs and our Nation's economic competitiveness.

There are some 100 export credit agencies and credit programs around the world that support foreign manufacturers. China's export finance activity is larger—China's is larger—than all the export credit provided by the G7 countries combined. That alone is reason to move forward on Ex-Im. We know that the Chinese Government used export credit as a weapon to win manufacturing business in critical sectors and to undermine American companies and American workers. We must be in a better position to compete.

We have had so much good job news in Ohio over the last few weeks. It is not a coincidence that for the first time in my lifetime, we have a President who leads by talking about workers, who leads by talking about unions. As a result of his leadership, we are seeing more job creation in Ohio. We have seen more jobs created in 2021 than in any number of years in the past. We are seeing now tens of thousands of manufacturing jobs—Intel, Hyperion, GE Aviation—coming to my State. It is all made possible because we are putting workers at the center of our economy.

Look at the results we are getting. Last year—this is worth saying like five times—last year, for the first time in 20 years, our economy actually grew faster than China's. Our GDP grew

faster than China's GDP. Again, that is because we have a President of the United States who puts workers at the center of our economic policy, who understands that carrying a union card means better wages, better benefits, and more control over your work schedule.

But we know that China and our other competitors aren't giving up. They are constantly finding new ways to cheat, new ways to undermine American jobs. That is why we need every tool possible to compete, including a fully functioning Export-Import Bank with an experienced, tenacious leader at the helm. Jobs in Ohio and jobs around the country depend on Ms. Lewis's success.

I urge my colleagues—as we voted overwhelmingly on cloture—I urge my colleagues to support the nomination of Reta Jo Lewis for the Ex-Im Bank.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of John P. Howard III, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of fifteen years.

Mr. BROWN. I ask unanimous consent that the scheduled vote occur immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON HOWARD NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Howard nomination?

Mr. BROWN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 62, nays 34, as follows: